The water on Earth is always on the move, changing state from liquid to vapor back to liquid and snow and ice near the poles and mountains. The processes used to describe the continuous movement of water between the Earth and atmosphere is known as the water cycle, and is often referred to as the hydrologic cycle. There is no beginning or end to the water cycle; it behaves much like a Ferris wheel at an amusement park, moving around and around.

**Cloud Cover**
- **Low Clouds**
  - **Nimbostratus**
  - **Fog**
  - **Cumulus**

- **Mid Clouds**
  - **Altostratus**
  - **Altocumulus**

- **High Clouds**
  - **Cirrus**
  - **Cirrocumulus**
  - **Cirrostratus**

**Visual Opacity**
- **Opaque**
- **Translucent**
- **Transparent**

**Cloud Level**
- **Low Clouds**
- **Mid Clouds**
- **High Clouds**

**Cloud Formation**
- **Convection Clouds** form because of large updrafts of warm, moist air rising up into cold air!

**Cloud Cover Determination**
- The amount of cloud cover is done by estimating the percentage of the sky covered by clouds.

**The Earth's Water Cycle**
- **Evaporation**
- **Transpiration**
- **Condensation**
- **Precipitation**
- **Infiltration into Groundwater**
- **Surface Runoff**
- **Plant Uptake**
- **Groundwater Flow**

**In 1803 Luke Howard used Latin terms to classify four main cloud types. These can occur at various levels of the atmosphere, low, mid, and high:**
- **Cirrus** - From the Latin word for "curl". These clouds are high level clouds composed of ice crystals and are white, wispy, and hair-like.
- **Cumulus** - From the Latin word for "heap" or "pile". They are generally individual, puffy white clouds with a flat base.
- **Stratus** - From the Latin word for "layer". These clouds are featureless, broad and fairly widespread, often appearing like a gray blanket.
- **Nimbus** - Latin word for "rain". Precipitation occurs from these clouds.
- **Alto** is used to describe mid level clouds.